

# AeU offers graduate diploma for practising preschool teachers

**KUCHING:** Asia e University's (AeU) School of Education and Cognitive Science is offering the Graduate Diploma in Early Childhood Education (GDipECE), which is designed for practising preschool teachers.

The programme is fully accredited by the Malaysian Qualification Agency (MQA) and is pegged at Level 6 – bachelor's degree.

The normal entry requirement is a diploma or Sijil Tinggi Persekolahan Malaysia but with recognition of prior and experiential learning (Apel), applicants with at least two years' experience in early childhood settings and Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia, O-levels, or Unified Examination Certificate may apply.

Applicants are required to sit and pass an aptitude test and submit a portfolio of experience.

AeU School of Education and Cognitive Science dean Prof Dr John Arul Phillips said the GDipECE curriculum adheres closely to Programme Standards for Early Childhood Education (2014) by MQA.

The programme is designed to equip teachers with the knowledge, skills, competencies, and values in developing a holistic child.

Students pursuing the programme will relate their practice to theories underlying child growth and development, methods and techniques in teaching science, mathematics, social studies, and language.

They will also acquire skills of observing and assessing young learners, guiding the behaviour of children, integrating technology to enhance learning, as well as lead and manage early childhood centres.

The GDipECE takes about two years to complete and at the end, students will engage in a Teaching Practicum for 14 weeks in a nursery and kindergarten.

Their teaching will be evaluated by academics and professionals from AeU.

During the Teaching Practicum, practitioner-students will maintain a record of their teaching, keep a reflective journal, introduce a teaching innovation, and have their lessons recorded and uploaded to an online platform for evaluation by a panel of experts.

The programme is delivered using a blended pedagogical approach, which enables teachers to continue working as well as study – earn while you learn.

Students are provided with all learning materials online, which include a self-instructional module (forming the 'must-know' content), several short video and audio clips explaining key concepts theories and application to real-world situations, and quizzes to test comprehension and understanding.

To support their learning, students are provided with 10 hours of face-to-face interaction for each course conducted once a month during weekends.

In these classes, well-qualified tutors discuss the 'must-know' content, demonstrate application of concepts in the classroom, explain the assignments, and preparation for examinations.

Evaluation is based on both examinations (40 per cent) and assignments (60 per cent).



Prof Dr John Arul Phillips



Punithavathy Kupasamy

Assignments are work-based involving surveys, observations, critique of articles, preparing teaching aids and manipulatives, designing lesson plans and implementing them in their respective classrooms.

Examinations at the end of each semester consist of objective and essay questions, held on weekends in close proximity to the student's place of residence.

Phillips further indicated that graduates from the programme, who wish to continue may transfer all 68 credits to an AeU Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood Education).

They would need a top-up of about two years to complete the degree.

The GDipECE is a flexible programme personalised to the needs of practising preschool teachers, who want to pursue a diploma without having to give up their work in preparation for 2020.

Taska Day Care Centre owner and principal Punithavathy Kupasamy, 44, graduated with a GDipECE in 2015 and returned in 2016 to enrol in the Master of Education (MED) with a specialisation in ECE.

"I enjoyed my GDipECE studies because the knowledge gained are relevant and applicable in my job. I tried not to miss any classes and routinely juggled between my study, career, and family commitments," she said.

Her experience with AeU had taught her better skills in multi-tasking and time management.

"I would complete my assignments on time while having to prepare lessons to teach in my day care school, and cook lunch for my pupils, family members and teachers," she said.

Register now or apply online at [www.aeu.edu.my](http://www.aeu.edu.my) for the May 2018 intake.

For enquiries, call 1300-30023 or 03-50223456, or email [enquiries@aeu.edu.my](mailto:enquiries@aeu.edu.my).